

In the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a telephony service on a telephony network, the method comprising:

establishing a ~~telephonic~~ connection between a caller and a call recipient via a network device during a call process, wherein the call process includes at least one of a group consisting of a call dial phase, a call set-up phase, a logical association phase, and a call connect phase;

receiving a command signal on ~~[[a]] the~~ network device during the at least one of the call dial phase, call set-up phase, logical association phase, and call connect phase of a call set-up phase in the call process; and

initiating a transaction between the caller and the call recipient, ~~as applied to the call set up information,~~ in response to receiving the command signal, the transaction being other than a standard call connection transaction,

wherein the command signal is transmitted from ~~telephone equipment~~ a communication device of either the caller or call recipient, and

wherein the command signal is ~~[[being]]~~ other than a standard call connect ~~or disconnect~~ command.

2. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the received command signal overrides ~~[[the]] a~~ conventional billing protocol of ~~[[a]] the~~ telephony network supporting the telephony service.
3. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein ~~initiating a service to the caller or the call recipient comprises initiating a transaction between the caller and the call recipient~~ the command signal transmitted from the communication device comprises transmitting the command signal associated with activating a single dedicated key on a keypad of the communication device.
4. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, further comprising transmitting a prompt indicating a request to provide the command signal.

5. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the transaction is automatically initiated in response to at least one criteria.
6. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 5, wherein at least one criteria is an attribute associated with the caller or call recipient.
7. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal is issued by the caller prior to the call connect ~~command~~ phase.
8. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 7, wherein the command signal is appended to a dialed telephone number.
9. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein [[the]] initiating the transaction between the caller and call recipient comprises initiating a transmission of a data signal, wherein the data signal is associated with [[the]] an activation of at least one key of a ~~telephone~~ the communication device.
10. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 9, ~~wherein comprising~~ comprising a plurality of keys [[are]] associated with a plurality of transactions, [[and]] wherein each of the plurality of keys is associated with a single transaction from among the plurality of transactions.
11. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 10, wherein the plurality of keys comprise at least one of a “*” key [[is]] associated with telephony and billing functions, a “0” key [[is]] associated with interactive network operator and information services access, and a “#” key [[is]] associated with commercial banking transactions between the caller and the call recipient.
12. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal is received from a telephone, and wherein the telephone, upon activation of a dedicated key, transmits the command signal.
13. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 12, wherein the dedicated key is selected from a group comprising a “@” symbol, a color coded key, a programmable key, a menu item, and a button.

14. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal is received from a telephone, and wherein the telephone, upon activation of a biometric trigger, transmits the command signal.
15. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal comprises an audio tone transmitted from a mobile telephone.
16. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, further comprising automatically associating a function indicated by the command signal with the caller as identified by a telephone number of the caller.
17. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 16, wherein the telephone number of the caller is derived from a caller line identity (CLI).
18. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, further comprising automatically associating the transaction with the command signal based on the call recipient.
19. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a telephony service according to claim 1, wherein the command signal is transmitted from the ~~telephone equipment~~ communication device of the caller by operation of one individual key on said ~~telephone equipment~~ communication device.